

Research on the Construction of Beautiful and Harmonious Villages in the Bayu Region through Art Empowerment in the Context of Rural Revitalization

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Abstract: As a major national strategic deployment, rural revitalization has profound significance for promoting the integrated development of urban and rural areas and realizing the modernization of agriculture and rural areas. To fully implement the national rural revitalization development strategy, Chongqing has set a goal to build 1,000 unique and livable villages suitable for both living and working by 2027. As of 2023, 107 demonstration villages have been established. This report aims to provide strategic support for rural revitalization from the perspective of “art empowerment for the construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in the Bayu region” through in-depth research, analysis of the current status of village construction, and exploration of industry trends.

Keywords: Rural revitalization; Beautiful and harmonious villages in the Bayu region; Art; Strategic support

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1. Construction status of beautiful and harmonious villages in the Bayu Region

“Beautiful and harmonious villages” is a new concept in rural construction, which further enriches and expands the idea of beautiful villages suitable for living and working. “Harmony” mainly emphasizes the cultural core and spiritual outlook of the village, reflecting harmonious coexistence, harmony in diversity, and harmonious relations. It values harmony between humans and nature, as well as harmony among people. “Beauty” focuses on the construction of modern villages that are visible and tangible, including villages with complete basic functions while retaining their rural charm and style. These are new villages suitable for both living and working that possess both inner harmony and outer aesthetic appeal. The construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in the Bayu region and the promotion of comprehensive rural revitalization are fundamental projects for building a modern and new Chongqing. They are the basic work to promote the integrated development of urban and rural

areas, bringing large cities, rural areas, mountainous regions, and reservoir areas together. They also serve as the fundamental support for advancing high-quality development, creating a high-quality life, and achieving efficient governance ^[1]. According to surveys, through self-evaluation, third-party assessment, and municipal-level review, combined with a comprehensive evaluation and public satisfaction scores, 107 villages (including agriculture-related communities) such as Nanqiao Village in Ganning Town, Wanzhou District, have been approved as demonstration villages suitable for living, working, and being beautiful and harmonious in 2023 ^[2]. Among them, there are 43 five-star demonstration villages, 37 four-star demonstration villages, and 27 three-star demonstration villages. Among the 107 demonstration villages in Bayu, there are currently 11 villages with a collective economic scale of over 2 million, 12 villages with over 1 million, and 13 villages with over 0.5 million (**Table 1**). Among them, Chuanxi Village in Lirang Town, Liangping District, has a current collective economic scale of 370 million yuan.

Table 1. Current collective economic scale of 107 demonstration villages in Chongqing in 2024

Amount	Over 0.5 million	Over 1 million	Over 2 million
Villages	Linfeng Village, Linfeng Town, Changshou District	Jin'ao Village, Tiaodeng Town, Dadukou District	Sanhe Village, Fengwen Street, Shapingba District
	Langjia Village, Wutan Town, Jiangjin District	Guopo Village, Bozi Town, Tongnan District	Huangzhuang Village, Yongxing Town, Jiangjin District
	Chashan Village, Hongchiba Town, Wuxi County	Jinlong Community, Shuangjiang Town, Tongnan District	Guanfeng Village, Gulu Town, Wuxi County
	Shichaomen Village, Mawu Town, Fuling District	Liangfeng Village, Guanba Town, Wansheng Economic Development Zone	Lvshui Village, Conglin Town, Wansheng Economic-Technological Development Zone
	Wanbao Village, Zhisheng Town, Rongchang District	Qingshan Village, Jinqiao Town, Wansheng Economic Development Zone	Zhuji Village, Shaping Town, Dianjiang County
	Shinian Village, Fenshui Town, Wanzhou District	Xinle Village, Longtan Town, Fuling District	Lingquan Village, Zhuxi Town, Kaizhou District
	Shaijing Village, Renhe Street, Yunyang County	Central Community, Mingyu Town, Nanchuan District	Ganquan Village, Manyue Town, Kaizhou District
	Quanfa Village, Quchi Township, Wushan County	Hongyan Village, Sanjiao Town, Qijiang District	Lieshen Village, Zhushan Town, Liangping District
	Baiguoping Village, Runxi Township, Pengshui County	Zhenxing Village, Longsheng Town, Qijiang District	Xinglong'ao Village, Meijiang Town, Xiushan County
	Shengtian Village, Huimin Street, Banan District	Heshui Village, Tuqiao Town, Tongliang District	Shiquan Village, Shihao Town, Qijiang District
	Tieqiao Village, Sanqu Town, Dazu District	Jingzhu Village, Xiannvshan Street, Wulong District	Wangpu Village, Jingguan Town, Beipei District
	Jiangjun Village, Qitang Town, Bishan District	Bailin Village, Chengjiang Town, Beibei District	
	Heyan Village, Zhengxing Town, Bishan District		
Quantity	13 villages	12 villages	11 villages

More importantly, approximately 80% of the villages mentioned above have benefited from the involvement of art in the development of their tertiary industries. For instance, Sanhe Village in Fengwen Sub-district, Shapingba District, focuses on developing unique industries such as cultural and creative arts, educational

experiences, mid-to-high-end homestays, and dining, aiming to create a modern urban “poetic countryside” model known as an “artist village.” Baoping Village in Xianfeng Town, Jiangjin District, utilizes artistic design to establish distinctive “Nine Houses and Nine Scenes,” a nostalgia hall, and a rural innovation center, leveraging a wedding photography base to drive a large-scale, comprehensive rural eco-agricultural industry chain. Longchi Village in Tongcheng Town, Wuxi County, themed around the 24 solar terms, divides the village into four groups: “Spring Growth, Summer Flourishing, Autumn Harvest, and Winter Rest.” It aims to forge a cultural soul and vitalize industries through art, striving to become China’s first immersive traditional 24 solar term culture and folklore village. Pingxi Village in Heyu Township, Chengkou County, revolves around farming elements, offering experiences that showcase the charm of farming. It includes a museum, an experience field, a children’s playground, and performances of the “Mountain Love and River Fish” scenario, establishing it as a 3A-level farming tourism scenic spot. Wangpu Village in Jingguan Town, Beipei District, combines elements of the flower and tree industry and red culture, promoting red element artistic bonsai sales, and has earned the titles of “Hometown of Chinese Flowers and Trees” and “Hometown of Chinese Wintersweet.”

2. The significance of art in empowering the construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in Chongqing

The integration of art into rural construction as a means to achieve the goal of rural revitalization refers to incorporating artistic design into rural development. This approach focuses on the original ecological and cultural environments of the villages, respects the needs of rural residents, and aims to create a rural landscape that balances ecological and cultural considerations according to corresponding design principles ^[3]. The emphasis of art empowerment lies in the interventional nature of artistic actions, tailored to the actual conditions of the villages. Through art empowerment, villages are endowed with artistic connotations, promoting traditional culture, tapping into the inherent value of the villages, and utilizing art as a tool to advance the revitalization of rural culture, ecology, and industries ^[4]. Art empowerment in rural construction manifests in various forms, such as rural lifestyle, environment, culture, and production, representing a significant trend in rural development under the current rural revitalization strategy. The significance of art empowerment in the construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in Chongqing is reflected in the following aspects.

2.1. Illuminating green mountains and blue waters, boosting rural economic development

Art possesses multiple attributes, including appreciation and economic and cultural values. Combining art empowerment with rural construction can provide valuable support for economic development in rural areas. The involvement of art can effectively meet people’s aspirations and pursuits for a better life. The primary means of addressing these aspirations is by enhancing economic income in rural areas. Additionally, economic issues constitute the core of rural construction and serve as the foundation for artistic development. As a unique resource, the integration of artistic design into rural construction can further tap into the artistic resources inherent in the villages, leveraging their value and transforming them through reasonable means to enhance economic benefits. For instance, rural cultural tourism represents a successful case of art empowerment in rural construction, driving the development of rural economic industries.

2.2. Strengthening the “roots” and “soul” to reconstruct rural human relationships and order

Rural revitalization requires both shaping the physical environment and cultivating the soul ^[5]. Cultural revitalization is undoubtedly the soul-building project of rural revitalization. In the long-term development process, rural society has formed a unique ethical mechanism, which has provided extremely important assistance for stable rural development. However, with the development of the times, especially the application of technologies such as the internet, many foreign cultural concepts have had a significant impact on the original cultural order of the countryside. While the original cultural order is being destroyed, a new cultural order has not yet been established, resulting in a relatively chaotic state of rural cultural order. The cultural order constituted by rural ethical culture is an important means for stable and orderly rural development ^[6]. Art has extremely strong inclusivity and universality, which can assist in the formation of rural social ethical order. Art has high moral value, which can effectively condense and strengthen the common consciousness of the community, and guide and regulate this common consciousness. Once this common consciousness exceeds utilitarianism, it can better unite people's hearts and unify people's spiritual world, thereby stimulating resonance at the emotional level of the group and forming a new emotional connection. In this regard, art-enabled rural construction can effectively build a cultural order based on rural common consciousness, guide and restrain villagers, and then achieve harmonious and stable rural development, injecting intrinsic spiritual motivation into rural revitalization.

2.3. Injecting a new era atmosphere to promote high-quality development

For a long time in the past, the industrial development path of the countryside was mostly planting and animal husbandry, which was single and low value-added, and the driving force for income increase was not very strong. Entering a new era, people have discovered that there are actually more choices. Village houses, customs, culture, local culture, etc., are all resource advantages of traditional villages. To comprehensively promote rural revitalization, it is necessary to speed up the modernization process of agriculture and rural areas, promote high-quality, efficient, and low-carbon agricultural development, create more employment and income-increasing opportunities, and fully realize the prosperity and affluence of farmers ^[7]. The “Art+” village development model has greatly promoted the economic development of the village. Many villagers who went out to work in the past have now chosen to return home for employment. Villagers can participate in the operation of the courtyard with artists and enjoy the dividends of collective companies; at the same time, they can also operate their own industries, such as farmhouse inns, baking, and brewing ^[8]. Many villages that once faced serious hollowing-out problems have gradually improved in this wave.

3. Exploring strategies for art-enabled construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in Bayu

3.1. Adding vitality through design transformation

Beautiful and harmonious villages should not only be beautiful in appearance but also take into account the improvement of quality of life. Many designers are boldly innovative and continuously improving rural production and living conditions. In Shangwei Village, Longhua District, Shenzhen City, Guangdong Province, facing the current situation that many idle and abandoned old houses are not easy to demolish and rebuild, architects stabilize the original walls by inserting modular prefabricated panel structures, rebuild modern living spaces, and expand the capacity of old houses. Some designers also enhance emotional communication among villagers by creating

poetic public spaces^[9]. The “Bamboo Awning Countryside Hall” in Shangcun, Jixi County, Xuancheng City, Anhui Province, has found a balance between traditional village protection and sustainable development. Using local materials and cooperating with villagers, architects have transformed abandoned courtyards into a public living room that combines artistic beauty with multiple functions. Projects such as the Wushui Information Platform, which is dedicated to solving rural water safety issues, and the “Toilet Revolution” project in Huatian Township, Youyang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County, Chongqing, all focus on leveraging the service function of design to improve the quality of rural life. Stepping into Shiquan Village, Changxing County, Huzhou City, historical buildings and modern dwellings complement each other, and the ancient rhyme of Jiangnan is infused into the green mountains and blue waters; walking in Dongziguan Village, Fuyang District, Hangzhou City, it feels like being in the Jiangnan water town described by Wu Guanzhong. The artistically transformed Hangzhou-style dwellings with white walls and black tiles are scattered among the fields and mountains, forming an impressionistic landscape of ink Jiangnan. This not only beautifies the villagers’ lives but also boosts local tourism^[10].

Integrating artistic creativity into daily rural life and allowing beauty to flow in the countryside, the practice of art participating in rural construction has become increasingly rich. Various rural art festivals use shared models to carry out aesthetic education; a series of children’s art workshops allows children to improve their aesthetic literacy through hands-on activities. These aesthetic education activities continuously extend the reach of art in assisting rural construction, further nourishing beautiful souls and cultivating a civilized rural atmosphere.

3.2. Cultural advancement as a driving force

Cultural development is a crucial component of rural revitalization. Revitalizing rural culture through art cannot be confined to the activation of local traditional resources. According to Zhang Ying, a researcher at the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, revitalizing rural culture requires a holistic approach, encompassing concepts such as harmony between nature and humanity, urban-rural integration, and the coexistence of beauty and utility. By utilizing the unique aesthetic forms of the region, it can embody people’s pursuit of a better life^[11]. This implies that art’s involvement in rural construction should not merely create simplistic visual landscapes or exist as an isolated artistic behavior. Instead, it should generate value and meaning that local residents are willing to accept, promoting material prosperity and spiritual enrichment. The design and renovation of Qingtian Village in Shunde District, Foshan City, Guangdong Province, can be considered a beneficial exploration. Designers, based on the local history, environment, farming, and folk arts, employed emotional integration and multi-stakeholder interaction to guide villagers in rediscovering rural values and enhancing their cultural identity and sense of belonging through systematic artistic construction^[12].

Making villages more conducive to business is a vital aspect of rural revitalization. Many regions have actively carried out relevant practices to activate local cultural resources and promote the benign interaction between rural cultural development and economic and social progress^[13]. In Rongjiang County, Guizhou Province, artists, architects, designers, and local intangible cultural heritage inheritors gathered in the countryside to innovate and revitalize the ancient indigo dyeing craft^[14]. Simultaneously, an increasing number of designers are attempting to unleash new momentum for rural development through project planning tailored to local conditions. In Jiunvfeng, northern Daolang Town, Daiyue District, Tai’an City, Shandong Province, designers utilized local natural resources to devise two eye-catching public spaces: the Jiunvfeng Study Room and the Soaking Pool. Respecting the original rural texture and mountain environment, they renovated villagers’ houses

and idle courtyards. This not only boosted local tourism but also drove local employment ^[15]. Creating regional IPs, building maker spaces, introducing emerging formats, and establishing homestay clusters. Various artistic practices with unique characteristics continuously expand new paths for rural revitalization.

Rural natural and cultural resources vary from place to place, and development paths differ accordingly. Regardless of the artistic form used to participate in rural construction, it is imperative to respect the history and cultural traditions of the village, its natural and ecological resources, and the villagers' lifestyle and customs. Only by providing design services rich in cultural connotation and quality from the perspective of "symbiosis" can people stimulate the endogenous driving force of the countryside.

3.3. School-local collaboration builds synergy

Art's participation in rural construction involves disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, economics, architecture, design, and art. This not only requires cross-disciplinary thinking for design planning but also demands multi-stakeholder involvement in implementation and co-construction.

Universities are crucial grounds for cultivating talent and are the main force behind art's participation in rural construction. This is evident in the art empowerment rural revitalization exhibitions held in various regions. To achieve sustainable development of art-driven rural revitalization, many universities have collaborated with localities, actively exploring talent cultivation mechanisms. For instance, the China Academy of Art adheres to the principle of "taking the countryside as the academy," establishing over 100 "Rural Academy" workstations in cities, towns, villages, and hamlets, forming a practical network rooted in Chinese soil. Every year, about 10,000 teachers and students travel to various places, leveraging their professional strengths to promote rural revitalization. The Sichuan Fine Arts Institute has also been committed to integrating art-driven rural revitalization efforts with the fundamental task of cultivating people with morality and talent. According to President Pang Maokun, the institute insists on the integration of cultural tourism and design-based poverty alleviation, parallel aesthetic education, and social education, contributing to the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute's experience in serving society through art. As an applied comprehensive university, Chongqing Institute of Engineering keeps pace with the pulse of national higher education reform and development in the new era. Based on its local and applied orientation, it focuses on the integration of industry and education, innovative education, and actively adapts to and serves local economic and social development needs. With "information technology +" as its professional talent training feature, it has cultivated a large number of high-quality, practical, and advanced professionals with "good foundations, high quality, and strong abilities", who have practically participated in the construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in Bayu. From a long-term perspective, whether it is to strengthen the construction of artistic talent teams or improve the interdisciplinary talent cultivation mechanism, it is of positive practical significance to offer professional directions related to rural construction in major universities.

4. Summary and outlook

The art-driven construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in Bayu requires the convergence of multiple forces. Establishing a mature and implementable artistic rural construction mechanism is key. At the new starting point of comprehensively promoting rural revitalization, it is crucial for culture and art to play their due roles in building a beautiful, prosperous, and harmonious socialist new countryside. The countryside provides inspiration for artistic innovation, while art empowerment fuels the revitalization of rural industries. Art's participation in rural

revitalization is a systematic project that requires systematic planning and a long-term perspective.

The art-driven construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in Bayu is an important task and mission entrusted to culture and art in the new era. Artistic creation can artistically process and transform local resources, thereby broadening villagers' income channels extended from local resources in the context of urban-rural integration and harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. This empowers the construction of livable, workable, and beautiful villages, realizing villagers' aspirations for a better life.

Based on the art-driven construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in Bayu, comprehensively promoting rural revitalization and building livable, workable, and beautiful villages is the inevitable path for rural development. Beautiful and harmonious villages should embody both formal beauty and cultural beauty. The goal of being "livable, workable, and beautiful" indicates that China's rural construction has generally transitioned from survival-oriented to development-oriented. The value of China's villages is not reflected through a single economic indicator but through a combination of economic, ecological, and cultural aspects. For the nation to be revitalized, the countryside must be revitalized. The rural construction action, which promotes rural creativity through artistic creativity, is not only the fulfillment of the mission of the times by artists and literary workers in the process of rural revitalization but also their commitment to realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. Only by rooting art in local traditions and deeply integrating it into rural life can people paint a happy picture of the construction of beautiful and harmonious villages in Bayu.

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